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Parks and Property Department

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THE PARKS, RECREATION AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Subject: Toronto Island Concept Plan

Introduction:

By its March 15, 1983 adoption of Report No. 7 of the Metropolitan Toronto Executive Committee, the Metropolitan Toronto Council adopted the recommendation that the Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Department prepare a Concept Plan for the future development of the Toronto Islands parklands and related facilities. The potential for increased usage, future recreational needs, decentralization away from Centre Island and internal and linkage transportation development were to be emphasized in this Concept Plan.

The request responds to a requirement noted by the analyst in the Management Services Department reviewing the Parks Capital Works Programme. Specifically, concern was raised over a number of proposed major improvements (i.e. wave pool, internal transportation system and proposed ferry service improvements), each entailing considerable cost, being evaluated in the absence of a Council approved development strategy for the Toronto Islands.

Over the last decade, the Toronto Islands have remained essentially unchanged with only required improvements to site services such as the Island sewer system, as required by the City of Toronto, and the new Centre Island Dock for the "Trillium" being provided pending resolution of the Toronto Island residential issue. With this issue now resolved to the year 2005, a secure environment exists for long term planning related to the Islands' future.

Historical Overview:

On January 1, 1956, Metropolitan Toronto Council, in adopting Report No. 16 of the Metropolitan Toronto Executive Committee, approved the assumption of the Toronto Islands from the City of Toronto. At the time of assumption, the Toronto Islands were utilized largely as a residential community characterized by deteriorating structures located on low-lying, periodically flood-prone land, with public open space restricted to Olympic Island, Island Park and an area extending from Hanlan's Point Dock to the southern limit of the airport, known as Hanlan's Memorial Park. Park visitation in 1955, prior to Metro assumption of the Islands, was 292,384 visitors who came to the Islands for casual strolling, use of the Islands' natural beaches and picnic grounds or to attend events at the Islands' yacht clubs.

The initial development concept presented to and accepted by Metropolitan Toronto Council concluded that as existing housing was vacated and demolished the land level should be raised, utilizing local material, to an elevation governed by the lake levels for Lake Ontario established by construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway. On this new grade turf would be established without the importation of topsoil, utilizing the regular usage of fertilizer with irrigation.

Following Metro take-over of the Islands and for the next half decade, 1956-1961, a phased transformation of the Islands took place involving the raising of land levels to eliminate for all time the flooding potential at Island Park utilizing material excavated from Muggs Island, and at Centre Island by utilizing material dredged from lagoons. Visitor amenities included the provision of extensive picnic areas on newly-established turf at both of these locations. Four comfort stations, including the Centre Island Dock Shelter, and the Island Farm, which attracted its following of youngsters, were constructed during this period. By 1961, a new Centre Island Dock was completed and reconstruction of Ward's Dock began, as well as the development of further public attractions and support facilities such as a restaurant (Iroquois Coffee Shop), new visitor support facilities at Centre Island, and lighted walkways. As expected, public visitation to the Islands increased in response to this initial development with average annual visitation in this period approaching 400,000 park visitors.

The ensuing five-year period, 1962-1967, is characterized as one of the most dynamic periods in Island parkland development. This period saw the further removal of houses at Hanlan's Point and the raising of land levels to the 252-foot benchmark elevation above sea level. Recreation facilities completed or initiated in this period included the opening of the first phase of the Centennial Marina, whose basins were created by material removed and used to create the initial spacial elements of the Children's Amusement Area (Centreville) adjacent to the Island Farm, the Hanlan's Point tennis courts, Olympic Island puppet theatre, three new bathhouses and five wading pools. Further picnic grounds, pedestrian walkways and the Pier into Lake Ontario provide for more passive pursuits. Significant improvements were also made to site services such as the installation of irrigation systems, park lighting and park bridges. This period saw the completion of the new Ward's Island Dock and, in 1962, the purchase of the Island Ferry Service from the Toronto Transit Commission. Not surprisingly, the development of these new visitor amenities resulted further in a significant increase in park visitation, which averaged more than 750,000 visitors per annum.

The period following, from 1968-1975, saw a modest increase in recreation amenities with greater emphasis on the external ferry service linkage to the Islands. This period saw the completion of further stages of development of the Centreville Area, resulting in an appearance not dissimilar to that of today, the new Summer Centre for Seniors facility at Ward's Island, a recreation fishing facility at Block House Bay, creation of the Brau Haus Beer Garden adjacent to Centre Island Docks (now Island Paradise Restaurant), and the accommodation of increased boat mooring at the Toronto Island Marina. During this same period, a major expansion took place at Ward's Island Beach resulting from the placement of dredgeate material taken from the Eastern Gap.

As noted above, major improvements took place with respect to transportation services to the Islands with the relocation of the Mainland Dock facility to its present Yonge Street slip location in 1968, the opening of the new Mainland Ferry Terminal building and the recommissioning of the restored historic ferry vessel "Trillium". Park patronage once again showed an increase in this period with average annual visitation of 1,100,000 visitors.

In the period 1976-1980, no major works were undertaken pending resolution of the Island residential issue, save the installation of the Island sewer system demanded by the City of Toronto Medical Officer of Health.

Further to such a resolution in December 1981, a number of improvement items were undertaken. These were the new Centre Island Dock extension for the "Trillium", shoreline protection work at Centre Island and Hanlan's Point, street lighting improvements and the refurbishment of two outmoded park comfort stations. By 1983, an annual visitation of 1,300,000 had been achieved.

As part of the 1984-1988 Parks Capital Works submission, a sum of $2,950,000.00 was identified under Item 17, Toronto Island Development Various Projects, for work to be undertaken in the years 1984 and 1985, to provide for an internal tranportation system, the refurbishment of the now unused Island Filtration Plant building for parks maintenance use, the start to construction of a wave pool/slide ride facility and various landscape and electrical improvements. Approval of these works is, of course, subject first to Metropolitan Toronto Council's approval of a Concept Plan for future development of the Islands, which is the subject of this report now before you for consideration and approval.

The Next Phase:

In order to gain a better understanding of Island visitors' perceptions regarding the status of existing Island facilities and their concerns and expressed desires as they relate to future improvements and attractions, a visitors' survey was conducted over the course of the 1983 summer season by planning staff of the Department. This survey was administered to 1,500 visitors of the Islands and involved questions related to user's place of residence, age, employment, spending habits, frequency of visits, satisfaction with the present Island attractions and facilities and preferences for future development options. Appendix No. "1" provides a summary of the questionnaire responses which are highlighted in the section to follow.

The Users:

An analysis of place of residence of the 1,500 individuals surveyed reveals that the largest percentage of visitors reside in the City of Toronto, the next largest group being tourists (non-Metro residents), with the remaining visitors distributed throughout Metro's area municipalities. The park functions as a truly regional park within the context of Metropolitan Toronto and a much larger catchment area located within the Niagara Falls to Oshawa Corridor. The importance of Toronto Island Park as a tourist attraction for out-of-town visitors is clearly reflected by the 29 per cent. of users falling into this classification. No doubt many of these visitors are attracted to the Islands because of the proximity to downtown hotels, its reasonable cost attractions and the international reputation the park enjoys.

The repeat attraction potential of the park is clearly demonstrated by the significant portion of visitors who visit the Islands more than once over the course of the summer season. One time visitors were, in most cases, tourists.

Daily visitor expenditures are in the $2.00 - $20.00 range, with the greatest portion in the $5.00 - $10.00 range. The majority of these expenditures are made at Centreville and the various food concessions. By far, the majority of visitors interviewed were not adverse to paying a fair and

reasonable price for the ferry crossing or specialized recreation facilities. The park attracts primarily the young and the young-to-middle-aged family group, although senior citizens do constitute a significant user group.

Utilization of the Islands:

Use of more than 550 acres of public parkland is highly oriented to the Centre Island complex with 74 per cent. of the questionnaire respondents spending either all or a majority of their visit at this one area. At the other extreme is Hanlan's Point, which receives less than 10 per cent. of Island patronage. The questionnaire strongly suggests that there are many visitors who are totally unaware of areas other than Centre and Olympic Islands and the facilities provided therein.

Respecting future potential uses, it became obvious from the outset of the questionnaire administration that most visitors appreciated and enjoyed the nature and character of the Islands as they now exist. However, it was also recognized that considerable potential exists to augment present facilities and services with a limited number of new recreational offerings which should cater to the extended family unit. As indicated by the public, any new proposals should therefore key on the underutilized areas of the Islands such as Hanlan's Point. The need to retain a balance of active and passive recreation opportunities was viewed as paramount as was a balance of user-pay and non-user-pay facilities.

Future Opportunities:

Of all the various future development options noted in the questionnaire, one which elicited the strongest overall support was that of a major aquatic attraction, namely a wave pool/slide ride facility. Such a facility would appeal to local residents and tourists alike, attracting families, young adults and teenagers. No doubt part of the enthusiasm for this facility related to the extremely warm summer in 1983, and the posting of beaches advising against waterfront swimming.

Equally significant as the interest expressed in an aquatic attraction was the support for an internal ground transportation system such as a trackless train similar to that now in operation at the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo. This facility was viewed with considerable interest by seniors, handicapped visitors and families who bring along picnic hampers and other recreation paraphernalia when they visit the Islands. Those interviewed noted that a trackless train system would be fundamental to attracting Island visitors to other points of interest on the Islands, such as the wave pool facility. In effect, the internal ground transportation system is critical since the prime intent of this plan is to decentralize use away from Centre Island.

While the licensed restaurant/inn complex did not elicit as much support as the above new facilities, it is significant to indicate that in excess of 50 per cent. of patrons interviewed indicated support for such a facility.

A number of boating tourists were also interviewed as part of the questionnaire program who further indicated an interest in such a facility since it would produce overnight accommodation opportunities.

In addition to the above specific new facility attractions was a modest level of interest in improvements to existing facilities such as the expansion or relocation of the Island Farm, low cost, beach-oriented facilities, such as volleyball standards and nets along the beach strand, together with beach support facilities with washrooms, showers and change rooms. Specifically, it was noted that a high degree of interest exists with respect to slow pitch, co-ed ball teams who travel to the Islands after work to use the existing Island diamond and temporary facilities that the participants set up themselves. As noted in our 10-Year Concept Plan of Major Recreation Facilities, this is one of the fastest growing sports in Metro with the Islands viewed as an ideal location for downtown office based groups.

A number of excellent suggestions were received relating to improved signage and visitor information services both at the Mainland Ferry Terminal and on the Islands themselves. These improvements were viewed as essential not only related to new attractions, but also to familiarize visitors with other support facilities and the past history of the Toronto Islands.

Albeit there was considerable interest in the development of additional facilities, services and programmes for the Park, there was also a representative portion of the interviewed public (18 per cent.) who desired minimal change from its present circumstance with the exception of wildlife habitat improvements and further landscape plantings to replace dying and over-mature trees. While these individuals realize that some change is inevitable as new recreation trends and visitor pressures come to the forefront, they would like to see such changes accommodated with minimal impact on the Islands' natural assets. As will be highlighted later in the report, this became one of the most important aspects of the planning process.

Existing Deficiencies:

Concurrent with the foregoing research involving the public, an examination was made of existing Island facilities in the context of present or potential future uses to determine where shortcomings exist or modifications are required.

This examination revealed that the Concept Plan must make provision for a minimum number of facilities to be provided for visitors utilizing the Islands during the winter months. Further, there is a requirement that public information and signage systems be provided in those areas which are not heavily utilized at the present time. It further revealed that a good proportion of Island use is related to the use of particular areas for the staging of group "special events". These events can vary from festivals to convention-associated social gatherings, to sporting events and have over the years become a tradition at Olympic Island and the area to the west of Centre Island Dock. While events have had great success at these locations, some further distribution of underground site services and the provision of additional washrooms would make the holding of such events less costly and less disruptive to normal public use.

Related to this observation is the question of some structures which no longer serve the purpose for which they were created and as a consequence should be modified or eliminated.

An example of this is the Puppet Theatre on Olympic Island, which still receives use but which use is seen to be declining. As part of the plan it is intended that when such use ceases an examination should be made of the structure to determine if it can be modified such that it could perform some useful function relative to the holding of the above "special events". A further example of this is St. Rita's Roman Catholic Church. Prior to the refurbishing of St. Andrews-by-the-Lake Anglican Church, an Agreement was entered into between the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Toronto and the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Toronto in Canada that the reconstructed church building would be renamed St. Andrew's and St. Rita's Church, and both denominations would use it for services thereby making the old St. Rita's Church building redundant.

Another building which no longer serves its original function is associated with the recreational fishing pond and provision is made in the plan to retain it and modify its use.

The great sweep of Hanlan's Point beach fronting on Humber Bay has inadequate facilities for public use by way of toilets and changing facilities and this lack must be addressed in the Concept Plan. Similarly, with the envisaged broader uses planned for parts of the Hanlan's Point park area, there will be an increased need to improve turf quality to ease maintenance operations related to such increased use. The original aluminum pipe irrigation system is no longer operable due to chemical reaction and a non-corrodible plastic pipe replacement system serving the anticipated use areas will be provided as an essential part of the plan.

Erosion of the Lake Ontario frontage of the Island Park continues to be a major problem. The eastern headland (Aquatic Park) has served to protect a significant portion of the eastern island shoreline extending from the eastern gap. Unfortunately, the western section of the Islands, particularly the area around Gibralter Point, is not as fortunate since a previously proposed western headland was never constructed. This section receives the direct impact of lake waves from both the south and south west rendering it extremely vulnerable to erosion. Existing protective works have been breached, resulting in pronounced wave action undermining the shoreline. This is causing a retreat of the landbase to the point where park services and facilities are threatened.

The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the agency responsible for erosion control on the Lake Ontario frontage of the Islands, retained the services of The Toronto Harbour Commissioners to study the problem and suggest possible solutions. Their report presented April 1983, entitled "Erosion Control Study - Toronto Island Beaches", provides a comprehensive analysis of the issue with particular emphasis on the major problem areas at Gibralter Point. Two potential solutions are proposed, one being three quarry stone groynes extending into Lake Ontario transverse to the shoreline with gravel beaches between. The second alternative is five, one-hundred-meter-long, offshore, detached, stone-mound breakwaters. The first alternative would be built out from the land and as

such necessitate vehicles bringing quarry material by ferry to the Islands. The second and preferred alternative would be constructed from the water by scow and derrick. Although the water option is more expensive, it offers the advantage of having a much shorter duration of construction. Equally, if not more important, the scow and derrick option would have no impact on either Metro's ferry service or that of The Toronto Harbour Commissioners. The ferry systems and the Island roads would be saved from the wear of heavy truck traffic. Accordingly, timing and execution of the aforementioned works now depend to a great extent on the Authority's future budget allocations for shoreline management.

The north, or the so called inner harbour, shore also experiences its share of erosion problems, particularly at Olympic Island beach, where beach recession was occurring. Recent efforts have halted the recession through the provision of groynes, but further efforts are needed to restore the beach which was most popular in previous years.

The remaining shoreline work which will require attention within the lifespan of this plan is whaler and vertical sheet wall replacement along the Hanlan's Point lagoon wall. Several sections of the wall show signs of deflection and deterioration that must be addressed if the wall is to remain intact.

Since its opening in July 1967, the Toronto Island Marina has not yet achieved its true potential as a comprehensive boating facility. To a great extent this relates to the number of operators involved with the facility over the years and the difficulties experienced in financing required improvements and expansions. Fortunately, since the assignment of the lease in 1979 to 412237 Ontario Limited (Mr. Joseph McKenzie, Manager), a number of positive steps have been taken to stabilize the operation, improve efficiency and substantive interior improvements to its coffee shop, washrooms and pantry have been made. While major work is still to be implemented, we are pleased to report that the Marina operator will, with the assistance of the Province of Ontario's B.I.L.D. programme, undertake these and other related items over the coming years. Specific details of this project and its expansion to boater services will be detailed in the description of the overall Island Concept Plan to follow. The completion of this work will thereby enable this Department to complete long outstanding landscape improvements at the Marina site.

And finally, there is a requirement to provide improved facilities for storage and operations related to the ongoing maintenance of this heavily-used park area. Discussions have been held with senior officials of the Metropolitan Toronto Works Department with respect to the utilization of a large structure, the majority of which no longer performs a function related to the operation of the Island Filtration Plant, for this purpose. The filters and mechanical equipment are presently being cleared from the building under the C.O.E.D. Programme. An architect's evaluation of the building has confirmed that the structure could be retrofitted to serve the identified requirements. The provision of such a facility is critical for repair and out-of-season storage for the transportation equipment required in the Concept Plan, together with Island equipment required for park maintenance.

The Use Concept:

In view of input received through the public questionnaire and interviews with key user groups, the direction for future development of Toronto Island Parklands has become evident. Fundamental is the belief that the Toronto Islands should remain a reasonably-priced, family recreation attraction, catering to a wide variety of outdoor interests. While considerable merit is seen in attracting new visitors, particularly tourists, the nature and character of the Islands should not change dramatically because visitors enjoy the quiet lagoons and large picnic expanses. A limited number of new family-based recreation attractions were viewed as positive developments if the facilities were located in areas where greater public use could be accommodated, provided that they would not lead to further congestion of the Centre Island Ferry route and not infringe on naturalized areas on the Islands. Locations identified which could accommodate such new facilities and public services were the Hanlan's Point area, Gibralter Point and Centre Island West. Most visitors to the Islands seldom visit these areas preferring to remain at Island Park, Olympic Island, and the Centreville Amusement Area.

Critical to the success of this decentralized use concept is the provision of an on-island ground transportation system to provide for quiet, convenient access to the various attractions and to inter-connect Island facilities for those visitors wishing to use a number of different attractions during their stay. In effect, the Concept Plan provides for a number of activity nodes interconnected by the internal transportation system. Concentrating facilities at activity nodes will further pay dividends in minimizing site impacts and providing certain economics of scale as it relates to cost of site services.

The provision of new facilities, which decentralize Island uses, is also intended to extend the duration of visit and to provide additional park activities, thereby extending the seasonal public use of the park. All facilities described in this Concept Plan will operate during the period June 1 - Labour Day every year. A spring and fall season will see most facilities available at weekends with public service outlets available throughout the park area on week days. During the winter season a number of key locations would be open and available to service park visitors.

Daily use would commence in early morning, peak during the hours from noon until dusk, with extended evening use being possible, and indeed probable, in a number of locations.

The use of the internal transportation system will enable the user to utilize a number of attractions in a daily visit. While changes to traditional ferry schedules will be required as various elements of the plan come to fruition, it is apparent that regular, dependable service can and will be provided utilizing the existing fleet, including the "Trillium", now able to run in regular service following the installation of bow thrusters which will increase her manoeuvreability in entering the Mainland and Island Docks.

In summary, the proposed use concept will see the Islands remain substantially unchanged as a grass and trees, water-related park. Areas of environmental significance will be retained with ample separation from more active recreation areas. A major tree and shrub replacement programme will add

new greenery to the Islands, replacing over-mature vegetation. Importantly, the use concept retains the Islands as a reasonably-priced recreation attraction providing a balance of free access and user fee based facilities. Within the life of the 10-Year Plan, total visitation is anticipated to exceed 1.5 million visitors annually, up from 1983's high of 1.3 million, which can easily be accommodated within this 552 acre park.

The Plan:

Consideration of the input obtained, key person interviews and our own staff observations lead to the conclusion that the following range of new facilities, as well as improvements to existing facilities, should be priority considerations in this Concept Plan for the future development of the Toronto Island Park.

Internal Transporation System:

As noted earlier in the Use Concept section, the focal point of the plan is the provision of an on-island ground transportation system to link various attractions, thereby facilitating the decentralization concept. The proposed system is required to link new and existing attractions. The provision of an internal transportation system is not new in larger parks when dispersed patronage is desired. Notable examples are the systems currently in place at Toronto's High Park, the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo, and Park's Canada Point Pele National Park. Families, seniors and the handicapped are anticipated to make good use of such a system since it will provide access opportunities to various points of interest on the Island.

The system under consideration is a rubber-tired, 10-unit train system servicing a route from Hanlan's Point to the Centre Island Mall, turning before Manitou Bridge and looping back to Hanlan's Dock. It is not proposed to have the vehicles cross the Manitou Bridge into the Island Park complex due primarily to visitor congestion.

Each train unit would be comprised of a power coach and up to three passenger coaches. These units will also be capable of accommodating individuals in wheelchairs. Preliminary performance studies indicate that operating at full summer capacity, a 10-unit system could accommodate up to 1,600 people per hour from any given stop. Service along the route will be modified for the non-peak spring and fall seasons. Limited winter season service may be provided, weather and roadway conditions permitting. All stops would be provided with rain shelters.

In view of the 1982 roadway improvements between Hanlan's Point and the Mall, we do not anticipate any major changes to the roadway system to accommodate the proposed trackless train system.

Wave Pool and Slide Ride:

Over the last decade wave pools have made steady inroads into replacing the conventional deep water competitive pools. Presently, there are 70 such pools either in operation or under construction in North America. Ontario's first wave

pool was opened in June 1983, in the City of Hamilton at Confederation Park. Built by the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority at a cost of $3,100,000.00, this pool is forecasted to repay its capital debt within an eight-year period. The inaugural operating season for the Hamilton facility exceeded all expectations with in excess of 130,000 pool visitors (June 25 - September 11). The Hamilton facility borders Lake Ontario and as such is not dissimilar to a location on Toronto Islands as it relates to ground water conditions which are lowered in the pool vacinity by a series of well points. The proposed location of the Toronto Islands Wave Pool/Slide Ride is parkland adjacent to the south-east corner of the Island Airport property, occupying an area of approximately 2.6 hectares of lands. This site offers ample space to accommodate the proposed facilities while still providing sufficient buffering to adjacent park uses. Height restrictions adjacent to the Toronto Island Airport operation have also been considered when locating the support buildings and slide rides. Not only does this location serve to decentralize activities away from Centre Island but it also allows the various wave pool facilities to double as support amenities for the nearby Hanlan's Point beach.

The proposed pool will be approximately 27,000 - 30,000 square feet in size complemented with a generous deck for sunning and sitting out, picnic areas, a children's play area, food concession, raft rental facilities, change room/locker facilities and first-aid station. Since this facility would require an entrance fee, the complex will be contained by perimeter fencing and landscape features. Access to this aquatic facility would be available by walking from the Hanlan's Point Dock, a distance of approximately 700 meters, or via the proposed trackless train system.

The facility will operate over a June 1st to Labour Day season, 10:00 a.m. to dusk, seven days per week. Peak visitation is expected to be on weekends and holidays, when upwards of 4,000 individuals would visit the facility, with a significant portion being family groups.

Restaurant/Inn:

As noted earlier in the summary analysis of our public questionnaire, concern was expressed regarding menu diversification and the requirement for additional licensed facilities on the Islands. Currently the fast food outlets do not appear to meet the public's total requirement. It is therefore intended to seek proposals from the private sector to "build and operate" a full menu restaurant and inn complex. The restaurant component would have seating for up to 200 patrons and occupy approximately 5,000 square feet. Full menu and service could be flavoured with a nautical theme, for example, representative of the late 1800's.

The Hanlan's Dock area is proposed as the most appropriate location for such a facility. From this area, restaurant patrons will have a view of Toronto's skyline and harbour area as well as boats entering the Islands lagoon system. Visual impact will also be strong for park users approaching the dock area by ferry. Associated with the restaurant will be overnight accommodation facilities located on the second floor, providing the opportunity for an overnight stay at the Toronto Islands. "Harbour hopping" boaters, stopping off at the Islands and wanting a break from a night on board their vessel, as well as tourists to the city, would form the main clientele. A detailed market/feasibility review should be initiated before preparing a proposal call for this component of the plan. Such a concept is in keeping with the intent suggested in the City of Toronto Planning Department document entitled "The Central Waterfront; Final Recommendations". There is, however, some

difficulty in seeking such proposals in the context of existing legislation wherein the Public Parks Act does not permit the operation of a food concession for a period of more than ten years. I am, therefore, recommending that the Province of Ontario be requested to amend the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Act to provide for such operations and/or proposals throughout the Metropolitan Park System.

The Urban Farm:

In today's rapidly urbanizing world, the alienation of the agricultural producer from the consumer has increased to the point that many people are totally unfamiliar with farm life.

The concept of an urban or city farm is an idea that has taken hold in Europe with more than 30 installations in England, Belgium, Germany, Holland and Sweden. Unlike the conventional children's farm or historic period farm where the public views the farm scenes or operations from behind fences or corrals, the urban farm provides a hands-on direct programme involvement of the public with farm animals, crops and equipment. Its purpose is to establish contacts between the public, nature and farm culture, thereby providing a learning, as well as recreation experience. These so called "working farms" range in size from 5 to 25 acres and vary from a simple barn and corrals to facilities which include extensive tool sheds, farm kitchen and pantry, craft workshops and exhibit space in order to appeal to the widest age groups possible.

The concept enivisioned, as part of this plan, provides for the relocation of our existing Far Enough Farm from Centreville, where it is crowded between the amusement area and the Iroquois Coffee Shop, to the area opposite the Island Trout Pond, where it will be expanded into a full working urban farm. Space vacated at Centreville can then provide group picnic opportunities for the amusement area.

The proposed farm facility will not reflect a particular period in time but rather typify Ontario farm facilities, equipment and crops. Accordingly, there would be a barn with silo, a farm house (which would double year round as public washroom/food concession facility), animal corrals, petting farm and a variety of root, grain and vegetable crops, along with an apple orchard, complete with climbable trees for youngsters. Crops and landscaping would provide for seasonal programmes and displays such as summer berry picking and fall pumpkin harvesting. Song birds would be encouraged through shrub, bramble and wildflower plantings. The trout pond would become the farm pond, providing a site for farm ducks and geese as well as a spot to drop a line and catch a fish. The existing building adjacent to the pond will be modified for new use in this concept. Ample area would also be provided for casual family and group picnics to the west of the farm.

Through planned seasonal programmes and publicity, the urban farm is expected to be of particular interest to families with youngsters, school groups, day camps, youth clubs, etc. A unique opportunity also exists to involve the Island School and its staff in programmes at the farm.

In a large metropolitan area like Toronto where many youngsters and even adults are totally unaware of farm life, the urban farm affords a unique opportunity to gain an appreciation of this important segment of our society.

Beach Improvements:

As noted previously under the discussion respecting erosion matters and the proposed Wave Pool, there is an intention to provide for greater beach use at Olympic Island and Hanlan's Point. This work involves the recreation of the beach at Olympic Island, together with minor modifications to the existing beach house and, at Hanlan's Point, involves, in the later stages of development, the provision of a new beach house to serve the southern section of the long beach. The north section will, as noted, be serviced by facilities associated with the Wave Pool.

Improvements to Long Pond:

Over the years, the Long Pond Regatta Course has accommodated a number of prestigious rowing, canoeing and water ski competitions. Notables include the Dominion Day Regatta, which celebrates its 100th Anniversary this year, the World Water Skiing Championships, the Olympic trials for rowing and canoeing, and numerous other national rowing and canoeing championships. In August of 1985, the course will be the site of the World Masters Games rowing and canoeing events.

While this venue with its reputation for calm water in all weather conditions has served its users well over the years, it has become evident that a need exists for a number of improvements. These improvements relate to the silting in of the regatta course's north shoreline which no longer meets the required depth standard for a championship regatta course, and the requirement for a cable network for ease of laying-out of the nine-lane, 1,000 meter course. This system would provide a winch-operated, submerged cable network to allow slackening-off or tightening of the cables for the attachment or removal of lane marker buoys. Other improvements include starters' platforms and finish line stand for course officials.

In reviewing these requirements, both from a timing and approval perspective, it is evident that the course marking system and officials' stand is a modest cost item which might be implemented early in the development process. Deepening of the course, on the other hand, requires expensive dredging work which will require a number of government approvals and considerable lead time. Accordingly, this later item is viewed as a long-term matter that will require a number of years to finalize and hopefully, be the recipient of offsetting grant funding from the other levels of government.

Improvements to Boating Facilities:

As noted earlier in this report, management changes and the difficulty of funding major capital improvements have compromised the completion of the Marina facilities. As such, the Marina has failed to achieve its true potential as a public facility. This situation is, however, about to change as the present operator, Mr. J. McKenzie, has informed us that he confirmed funding through the Province of Ontario's B.I.L.D. Programme to initiate a number of major improvements at the facility over the next two years. Specifically, this work provides for 156 contilevered docks for bow to stern mooring at Hanlan's Point. These docks will be fully equipped with water and hydro service and a centralized pump-out facility is to be installed to serve these transient moorings.

At the Marina site itself, dock expansion will take place at increasing the total wet mooring capacity of the Marina to 510 vessels from its present 462. Changes are also proposed for the Marina's gas dock facility to accommodate larger vessels. Rounding out the programme are a series of staged improvements to the electrical and water supply services at the Marina, a new washroom/shower room facility and the rearrangement of space at the site for improved boater services. In total, these works are estimated at $500,000.00 and will do much to make the Toronto Islands a first class location for seasonal and transient mooring.

As part of this Corporation's long standing commitment to improvements at the Marina, a number of various landscape improvements would follow the various stages of the above programme, providing for site screening, wind breaks and visual enhancement of the Marina.

The timing, as proposed by the Marina operator, for completing the Hanlan's Point work this year is compatible with our planned works for the area which would not be initiated until 1985 at the earliest.

Information Systems:

Of all the major regional parks under this Department's jurisdiction, the Toronto Islands offer the most diverse recreational facilities. As reflected by the over-concentration of use at Centre Island, many patrons are unaware of the Islands' total recreational scope. This situation, in part, relates to the need for additional signage and visitor information services.

At present, Centre Island Dock is the only location where public information is currently disseminated by means of a small kiosk staffed by park personnel. As part of the information system, we propose that such services be provided at both Centre Island and Hanlan's Point Ferry Dock plaza areas incorporated into modified structures required to service the interest of the Concept Plan. This would provide more comprehensive visitor services apart from Centre Island.

Billboard style, "you are here" maps are also proposed to assist the public in discovering the park. These boards would be strategically placed at key points along the internal transportation system route and at the ferry dock locations on the Islands.

A final component of this signage programme would include Island History Boards. These displays would, through various colour and photographic mediums, highlight historical aspects of the Islands. The information would be designed for a 15-minute viewing time and provide interpretive entertainment while waiting for the ferry boat. It is further noted that an expansion in the Department's public relations efforts will be required to publicize new facilities as contemplated in this Concept Plan. This will take various forms ranging from press days, sponsorship of special events, printed matter and media advertisements.

Environmental Significant Areas:

A number of areas exist at the Toronto Islands which are noted for their diversified plant communities. This Department has long recognized the need to protect and conserve these areas (i.e. Muggs Island, Forestry Island and the

Wilderness Area north of the filtration plant) by restricting access through the issue of permits to naturalist groups and botany students. More recently, The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has designated portions of Hanlan's Beach, Snake Island and a section of Ward's Beach as environmentally significant within their 1982 Environmentally Significant Areas study. The purpose of this study was to provide background on such matters to its member municipalities, as input to the land use planning process. In the case of the Toronto Islands, the City of Toronto Planning Department has taken this input into its report entitled "The Central Waterfront; Final Recommendations" and designated these areas as Environmental Resource Areas.

The Toronto Islands Concept Plan now before you recognizes these environmentally significant areas and provides for their preservation by restricting development in these areas and the continuation of the access permit policy. Monitoring of the plant communities in co-operation with the various naturalist groups will be required to assess changes occurring within these communities. Where third-party leaseholds exist in or adjacent to such areas, detailed environmental evaluation will be a requirement before consideration of any proposed changes can occur.

Improvement To Tree Cover:

An important component of this Concept Plan relates to major landscape improvements for the Toronto Islands. As noted earlier, a number of the proposed new facilities in this Concept Plan will require tree and shrub plantings for shade, wind abatement, climate ameloration, screening and to blend the facilities into the surrounding parkland.

In addition to these site specific plantings there is a long standing need for replacement and infill plantings to replace dead and dying trees as well as provide for greater species diversity. At present, the park is dominated by old age Cottonwoods and Black Willow. Both species are maintenance intensive due to their susceptibility to limb breakage in storms, and time-consuming clean-up associated with the cotton-like seeds of the Cottonwoods. Diversifying the species mix on the Islands will pay dividends in terms of tree maintenance and improvements for wildlife habitat. It will also provide winter landscapes through coniferous tree planting as well as protection against major deforestation should a disease infestation strike the Islands. Over the years this Department has experimented with a number of different species and found that a surprising number can tolerate the sandy soils, high water table and exposure conditions at the Island. Undertaking this important work will ensure that future generations of park visitors will enjoy the greenery that has characterized the Toronto Islands.

A prerequisite of undertaking the above reforestation programme is to complete a comprehensive inventory and assessment of the age and health of existing trees on the Islands. A number of municipalities in Ontario have undertaken such studies with the assistance of infra red aerial photography techniques. Such an assessment would then enable the Department to develop a long term landscape strategy for the complex.

Capital Costs:

With the development of the Concept Plan, capital cost estimates have been prepared for the items noted therein. January 1, 1984 constant dollars have been used throughout the analysis. Costs noted represent what is believed to be a realistic range at a concept stage as well as respect the access difficulties the Islands present for construction purposes. It is noted that as detailed programme statements are developed and site planning takes place for these facilities in question, more exact costs would be available. Proposed phasing for the programme has been broken down into two phases: an initial 5 year programme (1984 - 88), followed by a second 5-year programme (1989 - 1993). Phase 1, at approximately $6,800,000.00, is in accord with the Department's 1984-88 Five-Year Capital Works Programme wherein $6,550,000.00 gross was indicated for Toronto Islands. As well it reflects estimates made in the 10-Year Concept Plan of Major Recreation Facilities approved by Council December 6, 1983 (Report No. 16 of the Parks, Recreation and Property Committee). Specifically, the initial phase provides for the following facilities and improvements:

Phase One 1984-88	Cost Range January 1984 Dollars		
Wave Pool/Slide Ride	$ 3,600,000.00	to	$ 3,800,000.00
Trackless Train	$ 1,300,000.00	to	$ 1,600,000.00
Retrofit of Island Filtration	$ 400,000.00	to	$ 600,000.00
Irrigation System - Hanlan's Point	$ 275,000.00	to	$ 350,000.00
Active Recreation Improvements	$ 155,000.00	to	$ 250,000.00
Landscaping Improvements	$ 350,000.00	to	$ 500,000.00
	$ 6,080,000.00	to	$ 7,100,000.00

It is anticipated that the cost of Phase Two of the work, which would include the creation of the Urban Farm, erosion control works, further improvements to the Long Pond Regatta Course, the provision of winterized facilities at Hanlan's Point Dock, additional beach facilities at Hanlan's Point and associated site service and landscape improvements, will be approximately $3,500,000.00 - $4,500,000.00 (January 1984 Dollars).

The requirement for the greatest portion of these funds in the 1984-1988 Capital Works Programme relates to the higher costs associated with the major new public attractions at the Island, which form the backbone of the plan serving to attract new visitors, and establish the decentralization programme.
While some potential exists for offsetting subsidies and grants from other levels of government, it is premature to speculate what the amounts might be, given the long term nature of the project and potential changes with respect to grant criteria and the uncertain climate related to future grant programmes. As details are developed and Council approval received of components of the plan, we would then be in a position to submit the necessary grant application and report further on any offsetting funds.

Operating Costs:

Based on the concept outlined in this report, it is projected that the total cost of operation of the Toronto Island Parkland will have risen by $850,000.00 annually (1984 constant dollars) at the completion of this Ten Year Programme.

Offsetting these increased operating costs are revenues earned at a number of the proposed facilities, namely the wave pool/slide ride complex, raft rental and food concession facilities. It is not possible to predict with any degree of accuracy potential revenues that may be forthcoming from the restaurant/inn facility as more detailed marketing analysis would be required potentially involving the assistance of an expert in the hospitality field. Accordingly, this facility has not been included in the analysis of operating revenue.

Taking offsetting revenue into account, together with the anticipated increase in revenue generated by the expected increase in annual visitation via the ferry system, the net increased cost of operation related to this Concept Plan is expected to be approximately $250,000.00 annually at completion of the works.

Ferry Service Implications:

As a result of this Concept Plan preparation, there are some potential implications with respect to the operation of the Toronto Island Ferry Service which must be drawn to the attention of your Committee.

As noted earlier in this report, the existing fleet of five vessels, with the now more manoeuvreable "Trillium" in regular operation, is capable of dealing with anticipated patronage to the Islands in conjunction with the internal transportation system. In so doing, under normal practice it is anticipated that two boats will operate to each of Centre Island and Hanlan's Point. One boat will operate an early shift overlapping the second during early afternoon hours. The fifth boat will operate to Ward's Island.

Expected passenger volumes indicate that it would be desirable for the fifth boat (to Ward's Island) to be the M. V. "Ongiara". This boat has good passenger capacity for this run, but potentially low for the new Hanlan's Point run. However, this boat cannot presently dock at the Ward's Island Dock area to discharge vehicles.

During the winter season the "Ongiara" is, of course, the only boat that is capable of operation in modest ice conditions. However, as the ice thickens it becomes necessary for the "Ongiara" to run to Hanlan's Point rather than Ward's Island, and Island residents are transported by bus to the Hanlan's Point Dock area. As weather conditions worsen, it often becomes necessary to transport the residents across the Island Airport to utilize the "Maple City" because the "Ongiara" is unable to negotiate through the thicker ice. In discussions with Island Airport Officials related to the Concept Plan, my staff has learned that, as and when the Island Airport is upgraded for STOL purposes and regular service is fully operational, it is doubtful if bus transportation across Airport lands will be possible. If such is the case, alternative arrangements will be required to enable Metropolitan Toronto to meet its obligations under Bill 191. This will involve winter ice breaking on a continuous basis which The Toronto Harbour Commissioners estimate will cost approximately $125,000.00 per winter season. In so doing, the route should be direct to Ward's Island and modifications made to

Ward's Island Dock to satisfactorily dock the "Ongiara" and load and discharge vehicles. This matter was considered at some length by the Royal Commission of Enquiry which led to the introduction of Bill 191, and it was noted that such cost might appropriately be shared by Metropolitan Toronto and the City of Toronto.

The alternative, which in the longer term is probably preferable, would be to build a new boat (75 per cent. of the cost of construction would be available by Provincial Grant) which should have the following characteristics. The boat should be capable of breaking ice under all normal Toronto Harbour ice conditions; it should carry vehicles together with approximately 500 passengers; and it should fit the configuration of the existing docks.

Two courses of action therefore seem appropriate at this time:

(a) meet with Officials of The Toronto Harbour Commissioners and the City of Toronto to establish costs and a cost sharing formula relative to a new operation that may be required as and when bus transportation may no longer be possible via the Island Airport; and

(b) investigate the cost of a new ferry boat which should have the characteristics as set out above.

Conclusions:

The following conclusions can be drawn from the foregoing material:

- The Toronto Islands enjoy an international reputation as one of North America's premier parks. Over the years they have accommodated in excess of 1.0 million visitors annually, the majority of which are families residing within the incorporated boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto.

- The resolution of the Toronto Island residential issue provides the opportunity for long range comprehensive planning and development improvements and new facilities to address changing recreation trends. The Concept Plan now before you addresses these matters.

- While the Toronto Islands have played a significant role in accommodating recreation demands of the Metropolitan populace, considerable potential exists to accommodate new facilities and additional visitors at the Islands, provided that such new facilities are organized in such a manner that a more even distrubtion of ferry passenger destinations can be achieved.

- Public interest ranks high for an aquatic theme attraction (wave pool/slide ride) at the Island Park provided it is reasonably priced and caters to the family recreation outing. Other specific recreation facilities proposed in the plan also cater to family outings such as the proposed urban farm and improved beach facilities. New softball facilities will find favour with young adults visiting the Park.

- The plan decentralizes new facilities and services away from the busy Centre Island areas thereby helping to alleviate congestion on the Centre Island ferry crossing and produce a more balanced use of the Park as a whole. Certain

changes will be required with respect to scheduling of the ferry services to Hanlan's Point.

- Critical to the success of achieving decentralization is the provision of an on-Island ground transportation system. This system will further provide for improved access to various facilities for the elderly and handicapped.

- The plan proposes a limited expansion of services and facilities relating to winter season activities at the Park such as warm-up shelters, winterized washrooms and programmed activities at the proposed Urban Farm.

- Protection of the Toronto Islands shoreline from further erosion is a necessity if the land base is to be stabilized and retained. Two critical areas requiring attention within the life of this 10-Year Plan are the Olympic Island Beaches and Gibralter Point. This latter item relates to project responsibilities of The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority as Metro's agent for erosion control.

- Potential exists to utilize a portion of the Toronto Island Filtration Plant, shortly to become surplus to Metro Works requirements, as a parks maintenance storage building.

- A majority of the existing tree cover at the Islands is primarily over-mature Black Willow and Cottonwood species which pose high annual maintenance costs. The Concept Plan proposes a major reforestation programme designed to increase the variety of species, provide for a measure of winter landscape materials (conifers) and ensure the longevity of tree population.

- At plan completion, the Toronto Island Park will further provide a blend of active and passive recreation opportunities for families and individuals concentrated at activity modes interlinked to an efficient internal and external transportation system. Areas of environmental significance will remain protected and preserved for future generations to enjoy. Site services and facility infrastructures including shoreline stabilization will also be substantially upgraded.

- Implementation of this Concept Plan will not only assist the Islands in retaining the past tradition as Metro's premier park but, in addition, attract new park users. It is anticipated that, at plan completion, annual visitation to the Islands will approach 1.5 - 1.6 million visitors.

- The total estimated Metropoltian Toronto share of the capital cost of this programme will approximate $10,000,000.00 (net) in 1984 dollars which have been reflected in part, in the Five-Year 1984-88 Parks Capital Works Programme and the 10-Year Concept Plan of major recreation facilities. Adjustments will be required as definitive programmes are presented for approval.

- The anticipated (net) increased cost of operation at the completion of this programme will approximate $850,000.00. This should be offset however by an anticipated increase in revenue of approximately $600,000.00.

- Further study is required to determine the most appropriate course of action with respect to the most effective method of providing future winter transportation to the Toronto Islands.

Recommendations:

It is accordingly recommended that:

1) this Toronto Islands Concept Plan be approved and utilized as the basis for developing future Capital Works Programmes for this park area;

2) the 1984-1985 work and the funding thereof be the subject of a further report to the Metropolitan Toronto Executive Committee involving the acquisition of the internal transportation system, the commencement of detailed engineering studies related to the Wave Pool and, as and when declared surplus by the Works Department, the modification of the existing structure at the Island Filtration Plant;

3) in co-operation with The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, a detailed staging and cost plan be developed and submitted to your Committee respecting required erosion control works for the Lake Ontario shoreline of the Toronto Islands;

4) the expansion of seasonal and transient moorings as proposed by the Toronto Island Marina be approved;

5) the former St. Rita's Church be demolished when surplus to park requirement;

6) Wildlife and Environmental Resource areas as detailed in this Concept Plan be preserved and that no recreational development occur in such areas;

7) a detailed vegetation survey be undertaken at Toronto Islands to establish the basis for an improved landscape program and that I be authorized to retain the required consulting services for this purpose (funds can be provided within approved Departmental estimates).

8) I be authorized to finalize discussions with City of Toronto and The Toronto Harbour Commissioners' staff respecting potential winter boat service to the Toronto Islands and at the same time initiate studies by an appropriate consultant to provide preliminary drawings and a cost estimate related to the provision of a new ferry boat (funds can be provided within approved Departmental estimates) and to report further to your Committee in this regard;

9) the Province of Ontario be requested to amend The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Act such that Clause 206(2) and Clause 205(5)(a) would be amended to read as follows:

"206(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Public Parks Act, the Metropolitan Council has power to let from year to year, or for such time as it may deem advisable, the right to sell refreshments and, subject to the Liquor Licence Act and the regulations made thereunder, spirituous, fermented or

intoxicating liquors within Metropolitan Parks under such regulations as the Metropolitan Council may prescribe.

206(5)(a) exercise all or any of the powers conferred on it under subsections (1) and (2) in respect of such lands."; and

10) the appropriate Metropolitan Officials be authorized and directed to take the appropriate action, including the execution of any required Agreements, to give effect thereto.

Robert G. Bundy,
Commissioner of Parks and Property.

No. 4080

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF ISLAND QUESTIONNAIRE

PLACE OF RESIDENCE

Location	Response	% Response
Borough of East York	40	3
City of Etobicoke	105	7
City of North York	210	14
City of Scarborough	148	10
City of Toronto	486	32
City of York	64	4
Sub-Toronto (Metro)	1,053	70
Out of Town	433	29
N/A	14	1
TOTAL	1,500	100

POINT OF ORIGIN BEYOND METRO TORONTO

Location	Response	% Response
Within 145 KM (90 Miles) Radius of Metro (Ontario)	242	16
Canada (Balance of)	81	5
United States	57	4
Other	53	3
TOTAL	433	29

VISITATION FREQUENCY

Frequency	Response	% Response
First Time	240	16
Once	324	22
Twice	222	15
Three	164	11
Four	106	7
Five	100	6
Six	49	3
More Than Six	280	19
N/A	15	1
TOTAL	1,500	100

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MONEY SPENT

$ Amount	Response	% Response
Ferry Fee Only	206	14
$1.51 - $2.00	70	5
$2.01 - $5.00	308	20
$5.01 - $10.00	378	25
$10.01 - $15.00	153	10
$15.01 - $20.00	159	11
More Than $20.00	226	15
TOTAL	1,500	100

PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT

Location	Response	% Response
Centre	945	63
Hanlan's	75	5
Ward's	75	5
Olympic	15	1
Equal	135	9
Other Misc.	255	17
TOTAL	1,500	100

FERRY SERVICE

Category	Response	% Response
Adequate	1,410	94
Not Adequate	90	6
TOTAL	1,500	100

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DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCE

Development Proposal	Yes Response	% Response
Aquatic Theme (Wave Pool)	983	65
Recreation Theme	550	36
Interpretive Theme	381	25
Hanlan's "As Is"	277	18
Trackless Train	1,066	67
Formal Restaurant	810	54
Improved Horticultural Displays	390	26

*NOTE: 4% of total do not support admission fee

PARK SERVICE RATING

Category	Response	% Response
Excellent	615	41
Good	720	48
Fair	45	3
Poor	2	.1
N/A	118	7.9
TOTAL	1,500	100